



**Wyoming  
Department of Agriculture**

Dave Freudenthal, Governor  
John Etchepare, Director

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Governor Freudenthal Proclaims March 20<sup>th</sup> Wyoming Ag Day**

Cheyenne (March 12, 2009) - Governor Dave Freudenthal recently proclaimed March 20<sup>th</sup>, the first day of spring, Wyoming Ag Day. This year, Wyoming Ag Day will coincide with National Ag Day to recognize and celebrate the contributions of Agriculture to the state and the nation.

In Wyoming, Agriculture plays a vital role in securing open spaces and wildlife habitat. Wyoming ranks eleventh in total acres of farms and ranches with 30.1 million acres dedicated to farming and ranching according to the 2007 census of agriculture. The state also ranks first nationally in the average size of farms and ranches. Without agriculture's presence, these 30.1 million acres that serve as habitat and open space could be lost to development.

"Here at the WDA, we are excited about Wyoming Ag Day and what it stands for," said John Etchepare, Director of the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. "It's a wonderful opportunity for the citizens of Wyoming to recognize the contribution that the agriculture industry makes to the state as well as how it maintains the heritage and work ethic of Wyoming."

Ag Day falls during National Ag Week which starts on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> and ends on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>. In the United States, Agriculture is the #1 export with more than \$49 billion annually and generates 20% of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product. Every year, producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless others across America join together to recognize the contributions of agriculture.

"Without agriculture, we would almost certainly lose a large portion of our economy, open spaces and heritage," said Etchepare. "We hope that everyone takes time during National Ag Week and Wyoming Ag Day to learn more about how much the agriculture industries and lifestyle benefit the state and the nation on a daily basis."